

N E W S R E L E A S E

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Workers who lost their jobs because of this winter's freeze can receive Disaster Unemployment Assistance

SACRAMENTO – Individuals who lost their jobs in 12 California counties as a result of the freeze that began January 11, 2007, may be eligible to file for federal Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) thanks to President Bush's major disaster declaration just issued for California.

The President's action makes DUA and Food Commodities available to people impacted by the severe winter weather in Fresno, Imperial, Kern, Los Angeles, Monterey, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Tulare, and Ventura Counties.

"We're glad to see the federal response to Governor Schwarzenegger's request for aid," said Patrick Henning, Director of the California Employment Development Department (EDD) which administers the Unemployment Insurance program for the state. "This allows us to help get additional assistance to those who've been hit hard by the record cold weather that devastated so much of this state's valuable agricultural industry."

Disaster Unemployment Assistance provides temporary financial benefits to jobless workers and the self-employed when they have lost work as a direct result of a major natural disaster. While DUA is similar to regular Unemployment Insurance (UI) in benefit amounts (up to \$450 per week) and duration (26 weeks), eligibility is somewhat different.

Eligibility for DUA includes persons affected by the disaster who have a legal right to work in the United States; who are or have been self-employed, or who are unable to establish a valid regular UI claim; or individuals who have exhausted their UI claim benefits. It also includes persons unable to reach work because of the disaster; persons scheduled to begin work that was terminated because of the freeze; and persons physically unable to work because of a disaster-incurred injury.

(more)

Self-employed individuals filing DUA claims should be prepared to provide tax returns, business records, affidavits from individuals having knowledge of their business, or any other evidence to verify self-employment.

Claims for DUA must be filed with EDD within a 30-day period following the announcement of the availability of DUA. Therefore, the deadline for filing claims will be April 13, 2007.

Individuals who advised EDD that they were affected by the disaster and are currently drawing regular Unemployment Insurance benefits will be notified by EDD if their regular benefits are exhausted during the Disaster Unemployment Assistance period and are eligible for DUA.

The fastest and easiest way for Individuals who wish to file a claim and are not already collecting UI benefits is to use the Department's Internet Claim application "eApply4UI" <https://eapply4ui.edd.ca.gov/>. The application is available in both English and Spanish. Individuals with questions about their claim can submit them via the Internet by clicking on the "Contact Us" link at the bottom of any page on EDD's Web site at www.edd.ca.gov or by calling EDD at:

- English 1-800-300-5616
- Spanish 1-800-326-8937
- Cantonese 1-800-547-3506
- Mandarin 1-866-303-0706
- Vietnamese 1-800-547-2058
- TTY (non-voice) 1-800-815-9387

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